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# Greenhouse Gossip

PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THOSE INTERESTED

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No. 8

FIGHT FLORAL CO., Inc.  
22 W. 26th Street, New York, N. Y.

OCTOBER  
1942



*"Conservation of labor is extremely  
vital to the preservation of  
our industry."*

There is no question about this fact. Our greatest difficulties during the coming seasons will be the labor shortage and rubber shortage. There's not much we can do about the transportation problem except to use our ingenuity, to save on deliveries whenever possible and to transmit orders to other florists closer to the recipient of the flowers than we are. There's still not enough of it being done. The problem is so serious that personal gain must be curtailed if our business is to continue. True the demand will be there and the opportunity to make money is excellent, but really we must look beyond the immediate present.

The matter of labor shortage is partially within the range of our own correction. We can use older men, we can use women, and most of all, we can *conservate*. One of the ways of doing that is to buy plants and cuttings from specialists. The chrysanthemum is an excellent example. Right now when your crops are coming into flower is the time to determine the needs for the coming year. You might say, "Well, how do we know whether we should buy or not?" That's only true if you cannot produce and deliver. Cuttings ordered now need not be delivered until late May or June. That will save much labor in potting and caring, because good cuttings planted directly into pots or benches, upon receipt from a specialist, produce excellent plants. Many are doing it. To save your own stock may seem thrifty, but it occupies valuable space, which could be used to better advantage by growing cut flowers locally and thus avoid the danger of shortages due to transportation. Besides, it takes time to take care of stock and make and root cuttings—that means labor. The same will hold true of other plants—cyclamen, hydrangeas, calceolarias, azaleas, etc.

This war is going to make many changes in our methods and the sooner we realize it the better for us all.

**HOSPITALITY**—Any way you look at it, meat rationing is going to knock the everlasting daylights out of hospitality. The only way a week-end guest can make himself welcome will be to bring along a ham or a slab of beef.

**EUCHARIS AMAZONICA**—This is an excellent subject, providing flowers for Xmas, Valentine Day and Easter, of good keeping quality which are very useful for corsages. The bulbs come with roots and should be planted by November. The best soil is light with sand and well rotted manure. It should drain readily. Five to eight bulbs may be planted in an 8-inch pot and should be grown

in a 60° house with bottom heat. It is best to plunge the pots in soil. During the growing period applications of liquid manures or nitrogenous fertilizers are beneficial. After flowering, rest the plants for about three weeks and start back into growth. Do not permit foliage to die down. Two and sometimes three crops may be expected during the year. Never disturb the bulbs, but keep on the dry side during the Summer. The mealy bug is the worst enemy. Sponging the leaves is the best remedy.

**CHEESE**—In a plea to eat more cheese, a government bureau makes it appear as almost a patriotic duty. Our patriotism stops ten paces from limburger.

**LILIES**—Avoid potting lilies in old mum soil. Too often it is high in nitrates, which prevents roots from forming. Pot as soon as received and place them in a temperature of 54-56°. They may be kept in a cool storage, cold frames, under the bench, or on top (covered to prevent drying). Run dry to establish root action. Erabus are potted earlier and may have to be brought out before Christmas. Bring Gigs and Crofts out after Christmas and carry at 58-60°.

Crofts must be spaced farther than the others because of their large leaves. Avoid the use of too much nitrogenous fertilizer—buds may split or plants become too soft. Bonemeal is a waste of fertilizer, because it becomes available to the plant too slowly. Superphosphate often helps to keep the plants short, and is best applied in the potting mixture at a 4-inch pot per wheelbarrow.

If early, drop the temperature gradually to 56 or 54°. Too quick a drop may cause trouble. If late, raise the temperature *and humidity*. Erabus are slower so allow more time for them. Usually 12-13 weeks for a Gig after bringing up on top of the bench, but this depends upon the temperature. Time them by allowing 6 weeks to flowering when the buds show in the leaves, and 2 weeks when the buds tip over from an upright position to a horizontal or somewhat drooping position. *This may be shortened.* Gigs can be run as high as 85° providing the plants are syringed often (warm water preferable). Lights are helpful on Gigs. Use 150-watt bulbs, 4 feet apart, 18 inches above the tops, from 4-6 hours per night. Syringe to prevent drying of the tops from heat of the lights. To secure higher bud count, lower the temperature to 50° for 2 weeks when the shoots get 3-4 inches above the pot. Then raise the temperature to 60°.

Crofts are slow, and best when not pushed above 65°. They can be raised higher but must be syringed. Heat and humidity cause stretching—promote soft growth.

Creoles cannot be run as warm as other lilies. Pot them the first of November and carry them at a temperature of 48-50° until about 6 weeks before Easter, then raise the temperature to 60°. Buds should be showing at this time. If not, raise the temperature earlier than 6 weeks before Easter—some guessing will have to be done. Creoles can be successfully grown in flats about 4 inches deep. For a standard flat about 16 x 24 inches, *only 10 bulbs* should be planted. They need plenty of space and all the light they can get. No side or gutter benches, else they will blast or come blind.

Regals can be easily forced for Easter. Pot Jan. 1 and place on top of the bench at 60°. They may be raised to 70 or 75° without danger if syringed. It takes only 8-10 weeks to flower at the higher temperatures, but they are tall—best for cut flowers. They will make Easter if potted as late as Feb. 1, but they must be pushed hard.

**MISSIONARY WORK**—A quiet, tolerant minister of the gospel, after reading of the brutal treatment given American prisoners by the Japanese, remarked that so far as he is concerned Gen. Doolittle is the ideal foreign missionary.

**BUGS**—With the advent of cooler weather the many bugs which infest our plants migrate to warmer quarters—the greenhouse. Hence it is smart to take precautions against them now. First, keep the side vents closed and second, spray or dust regularly to prevent serious infestations later.

**AZALEAS FOR CHRISTMAS**—Plants with well set buds may be flowered for Christmas by placing them in *light, cool* storage for a month in October. 45-50° is the proper temperature, but be sure that enough light is present to prevent foliage drop.

**SAINTPAULIA**— $2\frac{1}{2}$ -in. plants potted now will make fair plants for Christmas. However, 4-in. plants will really make excellent specimens. In potting, be sure to use coarse leaf mold in the soil and water sparingly after repotting. Keep shaded, else you'll burn the plants. To prevent spotting, don't water with cold water overhead. Early morning watering with cold water is O.K. because at that time the temperature of the leaf is lower. It's the difference in temperature between the leaf and the water that causes the trouble. Watch out for mite and mealy bugs.

**FLAT TIRES**—Congressmen ask how they are to campaign this fall on flat tires. It could, of course, be worse. They could run on their records.



This is our LILUM CREOLE, Selected Stock. Thirty perfect blooms were on this plant, grown from a triple-nose Bulb

## LILY BULBS

**LILUM HARRISI**—Ready now.

	Case	
6- 7 (335 in a case).....	\$60.00	
7- 9 (200 in a case).....	60.00	
8-10 (150 in a case).....	60.00	
9-11 (100 in a case).....	60.00	
11-13 ( 50 in a case).....	60.00	

**LILUM REGALE**—Selected stock.

	100	1000
6- 7 (250 in a case).....	\$7.50	\$65.00
7- 8 (250 in a case).....	10.00	90.00
8- 9 (200 in a case).....	14.00	120.00
9-10 (100 in a case).....	17.00	150.00

**LILUM CREOLE**—Selected Stock.

There are many lots of Creole Lilies. Ours are selected, clean stock.	100
6 in.....	\$25.00
7 in.....	35.00
8 in.....	45.00
9 in.....	55.00
10 in.....	65.00

**WEST COAST LILIES**

Washington and Oregon	100
6-7 in.....	\$55.00
7-8 in. (if available).....	60.00

Other Lilies will be arriving soon. Ask for prices.

Some of the above Lilies we have already in proper storage so that customers may plant them during October for early cut blooms, if so desired.

**POINSETTIAS**—Pan in reasonably poor soil. Add fertilizers after root action has developed. Blood or tankage are good if liquid ammonium sulphate is not available (1 oz. to 2 gal. water). Liquid manure will also do. Keep foliage on by avoidance of drafts, changes in temperature and improper watering. After a good root system has developed, keep on the wet side.

**CYCLAMEN**—Don't fertilize from now on. Keep elevated if possible to develop a pot-bound condition. That's insurance for Christmas flowering.

**YELLOW CALLA**—Upon the receipt of the bulbs, unpack them and place them in flats giving plenty of air. Keep these in a temperature of 90° until December and then either pot directly in a soil of light nature mixed with  $\frac{1}{4}$  well rotted manure or else put in sphagnum moss until roots develop and then pot. In either case, keep them in temperatures of 60 to 65° for best rooting. Grow in 60°. Several small bulbs in a pot make a better showing for sale.

**CALCEOLARIA**—Fortunately this year Easter comes late enough so that no artificial means will be necessary to bring these plants in bloom at that time. However, if you wish to have some for Valentine's Day, use additional light. String your 50-watt lamps about 5 feet apart, 3 or 4 feet above the bench, and use light for 4 hours each day beginning at dusk. This should be done in November and continued until buds show. The soil for the crop should be slightly acid and could be made up of three parts loam, one part manure and one part sand. Because calceolarias show lack of fertilizer elements readily, a 4-inch potful of 4-12-4 to a wheelbarrow should be added at potting from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to the finished size. You might just as well pot directly into fives. You will find that it will save time in shifting and give better plants provided you are careful in watering. These plants grow best in a temperature of 55°. If you use the shrubby, small-flowered kinds, propagated from cuttings, be sure to pot deeply enough even when shifting to prevent toppling over as the plants grow. Over-watering, lack of potash or alkaline soil, will cause yellowing.

Have you thought about what you will require in Fall Bulbs? If you haven't ordered, send for our complete list of Bulbs and cover your requirements before many items may be sold out.



**SNAPS**—Growers often wonder why their snaps are soft and with comparatively small flower heads. There are several good reasons for that. In the first place, the soil should be well aerated, which means it should be coarse, or the same thing can be secured by using plenty of manure but growing in very shallow benches (not more than 4-inches of soil). Secondly, snapdragons are easily overwatered. As a matter of fact, if watered and then allowed to dry, longer and stiffer stems will develop. In the third place, snaps do not require too much fertilizer. Low nitrogen will give much better spikes or heavier stems than lots of fertilizers. Don't grow over four stems to a plant. Quality sells.

**THE GERANIUM**—It is said that the geranium was created to honor the virtues of Mohamet. One day when he was washing his shirt, he hung it to dry on a lavender mallow at the water's edge. It did not take long for the moisture to evaporate, but in that time a marvelous change had taken place. The plant was no longer a mallow. It was head high adorned with flowers of brilliant red and exhaling a spicy and piquant odor. It had changed to a geranium, the first of its tribe. Believe it or not !!!

**IRIS CULTURE**—For earliest flowering use precooled Wedgwood. Flat immediately upon receipt and keep in 45-50°. In four weeks move to a house of 55-60° and don't shift flats after then (use flats 3-4 inches deep). This prevents damage to roots and causes blasting of buds. While growing in the warm house be sure that the soil does not dry, particularly after the buds can be felt. One day's neglect and you may lose a crop.

For later forcing of Wedgwood, keep bulbs in flats—dry for about 10 days before flattening. Bring in for forcing from December on.

The Imperator, white and yellow, should not be started into forcing before January. In 50-55° these will flower in March and April. Precooled bulbs of these varieties may be had in bloom by the end of January.

To avoid blasting remember (1) not to keep dry when forcing, particularly after you can feel the buds; (2) do not shift flats if they root through the bottoms, placement on boards will eliminate that; (3) if weakened by extreme heat, too much nitrogen in the soil, not sufficient light, blasting will take place; (4) mosaic will do the same but rarely bothers if plants are kept growing vigorously without a check.

Small sized iris (6-7) are useful for June. Flat early, place in frames or plant in frames to a depth of 5 inches. Have low fertility. By heavy watering in May longer stems may be obtained.



**GLORIOSA LILY**—It looks similar to rubrum lily but red in color. In limited quantities there is a good demand for it. Pot tubers in January, several to a 6-inch pot, in loam and leaf mold, slightly acid and with good drainage. During the growing period give lots of water and keep in a temperature of 65°. It grows tall and needs supports. After flowering dry until the foliage turns yellow, place in storage of about 40° and after two months can be used over again. The tubers will remain dormant in cold storage for several months and thus can be used for succession planting.

**KILL-JOYS**—In Washington OPA decided not to put a ceiling over mistletoe.

**THE FIGHTERS**—It appears that the Irish figure they have stayed out of the fight long enough and it makes no difference to them who they take on, so long as they get action.

**ORCHID TUBES**—The regular Tubes for shipping and handling of cut Orchid blooms are practically impossible to obtain at present. We are now selling Plastic Tubes as the nearest substitute we can find for this purpose.

**GROW AS MUCH STOCK AS POSSIBLE**—Indications are that there will be a strong demand for all cut flowers and pot plants produced this Fall, Winter and Spring. If you had any doubt about growing any particular item, decide in favor of growing.

You will be glad to have the stock on hand when the demand is there for it, and without doubt, at a fair price for your product. It can be realized that with transportation of all kinds being cut down, you will need all the stock you can grow.

Don't depend on others to help you out with stock! Have your own when you need it!

Prices for Summer ROSES, early ASTERS, and now the good prices for early cloth POMPONS and MUMS are evidence of a strong, sustained demand. If you have been shipping to the market, you know this.



PANAMIGA, The South American Friendship Plant

## PANAMIGA

A NEW HOUSEPLANT—Also Ideal for Dish Gardens and Terrariums

Your customers are looking for just such a new houseplant which can stand shade and unfavorable conditions. They will love Panamiga's interesting color and neat appearance.

To test the reaction of the public, 2000 small plants were offered at the 1942 International Flower Show in New York with the result that all of them were sold in 5 days.

Panamiga is introduced by the originator of Lieb's Winter Marigold, Piggyback Plant, etc.

### STRONG ROOTED CUTTINGS

\$12.00 per 100; 250 to 1000, \$100.00 per 1000; 1000 or more, \$80.00 per 1000

No order for less than 50 plants

## **CHRYSANTHEMUM SHOW**

The Chrysanthemum Society of America will hold their annual Convention and Show as usual. This year it will be in New York City, November 5, 6, 7, 8.

Arrange to exhibit for the benefit of the industry and yourself. The Show is both for our members, the trade, and on exhibition to the public. It is a worthy effort at all times and now more so for many reasons because of present conditions. Be a part of the Show! Exhibit and attend the Convention!

For full particulars, contact Secretary Gus Poesch, 1659 Westwood Ave., Columbus, Ohio.

### ***A Pocketbook for You***

We are of course referring to the *pocketbook plant*—Calceolaria. The showy, brilliantly hued and spotted flowers of this plant are extremely attractive and in these days of heavy taxation, suggest the need of ample pocketbooks to save cash to run the war.

Besides, it gives a lot for the money—try it on your customers! Planted now, from  $2\frac{1}{4}$  in., a 6 in. plant will be had for Easter.

### ***Service for the Asking***

It may be out of our line, but many customers want this or that which is difficult to get in their locality and call upon us for a little help. It may be a bag of Nitrophoska of which we have been sold out, but we picked up two bags the other day from an importer and out it went promptly. It may be a couple of lengths of greenhouse hose which we didn't have, but managed to find in some rubber supply house and now this customer can keep on watering.

Whatever we can do for you, don't hesitate to call on us even if it is out of the usual line of duty. We are glad to help.

### ***Flower Legends—Carnation***

In our grandparents' day, the carnation was known as the pink, because the more popular varieties were pink in color. In that very fact, some essayed to read the occasion for

its later name, for pink is the hue of carne, or flesh; but we are also told that carnation is no more than coronation, because the spicy-smelling blossom was used for crowns and garlands with which the ancients decked themselves. The flower was held in affection, too, because cooks had learned to use it as a seasoning for dishes; and experts in drinking also found that it gave tang to beer and wine. The flowers were candied, like rose-leaves, and these conserves "wonderfully above measure do comfort the heart." There is a popular belief that the plant springs from the graves of lovers, hence it has come to be used as a funeral ornament; but it should also be a flower of rejoicing inasmuch as it is one of those that appeared on earth for the first time when Christ was born.

The Italian house of Ronsecco displays the carnation in its armorial bearings for the reason that it was a parting gift of the Countess Margharita Ronsecco to her lover, Orlando, when he was hurried from her side on the eve of their bridal, to rescue Christ's tomb from the Saracens. A year later, a soldier brought her news that Orlando had fallen in battle, and he returned the lock of her shining hair that Orlando had carried as his talisman, together with the withered carnation, which his blood had changed from white to red. Margharita discovered that the flower had begun to set its seed, and these she planted in memory of her beloved. The plant budded, and there was revealed a white flower, such as she had given to her knight, but with a red centre like none ever before seen in a carnation.

